

Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission
255 North Fourth Street
P. O. Box 5200
Grand Forks, ND 58206-5200

Minutes
September 12, 2023

Commissioners present: Chuck Flemmer, Bill Caraher, Gordon Iseminger, Paul Conlon, Brian Carlson, Sandy Slater, Doug Munski, Nicole Derenne, Judy Swisher.

Guest: Barbara Knipe, University Park Neighborhood

Meeting called to order at 6:31 pm

1. Approval of minutes from August 8, 2023. Moved Iseminger, second Slater. Motion carries.
 - a. Iseminger had a question regarding signage on the south end of town. Flemmer noted it is outside the scope of the DDRB. There is no change to the status on the Central High School signage.
2. Section 106 Reviews:
 - a. 728 Promenade Ct (not in a historic district) – Administratively approved. Interior work only.
 - b. 798 Promenade Ct (not in a historic district) – changing east entry door, venting exhaust fans and internal work. Motion: NHPA. Moved Munski , second Slater. Motion carries.
3. 1950s Flood wall presentation: Bill Caraher & Paul Conlon worked on the report of the 1958 floodwall around Lincoln Park. Both volunteered their time as Commissioners for this project. The research was to examine whether or not anything was preserved of the floodwall. It marked a time of transformation of the city in the postwar period which dovetailed with the Commission’s interest in postwar housing at a time when major hydraulic engineering projects are being built throughout the west. In part, the wall served to protect housing stock at the time when there was a housing shortage with the return of veterans looking to settle down. The wall was designed to protect up to 50ft. They completed an archaeological site form and used the 1994 topo maps to georeferenced where the wall initially stood. There is no evidence remaining. Caraher noted that despite the devastation of the flood, the 1958 floodwall stood and did not fail. The Army Corps ended up having to punch a hole in the wall to let the flood waters out.
4. RFP Draft for Urban Renewal
 - a. The coordinator is looking for a thorough reading of the proposal to ensure that the scope matches research expectations. The draft will then be sent to SHPO for review before it is distributed. The goal is to send it out by the end of September

allowing 4-5 weeks for potential consultants to prepare proposals for review at the November meeting.

- i. Commissioners offered a number of suggestions for the scope including research questions. Flemmer suggested asking what was there, why it changed, how did transportation change, why do the overpass?
- ii. Caraher suggested limiting the scope perhaps to buildings funded through the program – eg: Police Station?
- iii. Iseminger noted that the Tweten book has a sketched overlay on a photo of the urban renewal area.
- iv. Carlson asked whether buildings such as the Civic Center, Town House etc that are no longer there would be included. Perhaps also the old Town Square?
- v. Other research questions could include: what were the goals, how did it change the fabric of the neighborhood, is it possible to be able to visualize what it looked like before the overpass – eg: how many railroad crossings.
- vi. Outcomes to consider include – to create something to commemorate the earlier neighborhood and downtown. Are there buildings that are identified as nomination-worthy.
- vii. Iseminger noted that Ken Dawes lived in Papirmeister’s house and there are others around who also lived in that old Jewish neighborhood noting that it had a sense of community.

5. Chair Report: Chuck Flemmer (no report this month)

6. Coordinator Report: Susan Caraher

- a. State Review Board: the quarterly board meeting was held August 25th and considered two nominations for our Commission. Both Baukol Historic District and the Chester Fritz Auditorium were voted forward with edits to the Keeper of the Register. The following note from Lorna Meidinger to Agatha Frisby clarifies the status of the building in relation to the district.
“... when a district is being nominated, any property already individually listed must be included in the district as a contributing resource regardless of if its own period of significance or the criteria it was nominated under are different, even if it is just immediately adjacent. If an adjacent property is listed individually after a district is listed, the district does not need to be amended to include it.”
- b. Belmont trees update: the City has decided it will be addressing several other projects next year and therefore the issue of the Belmont Rd project will likely be considered in 2025.
- c. Myra grant application: The County Historical Society is applying the State’s Cultural Heritage Grant for new air conditioners and furnaces for the Myra Museum, and we have provided a letter of support for their application.
- d. UND Demolitions: the University has submitted its list of buildings it intends to demolish, asking for recommendations for documentation. We have communicated with SHPO the types of documentation we would like to see for each on the list, where appropriate.

- **HazMat building** - we have no issue with this decision.
- **Johnstone, Fulton, Smith residence halls** – Update: these have been documented along with the Walsh complex and other housing units.
- **Upson 2, Witmer and Starcher** - some documentation, at least a site form. We recognize that Starcher does not meet the 50 year threshold, and Upson 2 only just meets it, but it would be useful in the overall campus plan changes.
- **Hyslop Sports Center** - Level 1 or 2. Again, this building deserves a more comprehensive historic context due to its place not only as a sports facility but as a venue for Presidential visits, commencement etc, the significance of the sports history such as swimming and diving teams, and that Hyslop, as an alumnus, was significant in a national sense.
- **Babcock** - we would like to better understand the reasons for demolishing Babcock given its history, architectural significance to the campus core and that there was indication that this building would be repurposed. Should the decision be made to demolish it, we would request a Level 1 HABS. I would like to better understand the reasoning from a public relations viewpoint.
- Finally, if there are artefacts of significance such as plaques or busts in any of the historic buildings, we would like to ensure those are preserved.

e. 150 historic facts project: (Bill Caraher)

UND History Dept is working to put together a book with 150 mini essays on various topics related to Grand Forks. We have assigned some topics to various people and then UND history students will also look at less conventional stories.

Iseminger noted that Ken Dawes could reflect on the Franklin Club, and that Ted Jeliff wrote a history of the Greater Grand Forks Symphony.

Swisher volunteered to write the mini essay for Henry Wheeler and Jessie James and suggested that Molly Yeh be approached to write about Hot Dish.

- f. Riverside Dam query: the Engineering Department is working to update information about the Riverside Dam and is looking for more specific information regarding the drought, and when the river was low enough people could walk across it.
- g. Interpretive panels – NNN and Kannooski Park – Public works has installed the interpretive panels at these locations. Photos are in the meeting folder in Dropbox. NNN meeting – why are they so tall?
- h. Website: We're working in a sandbox on the new site to get it ready to go live. The coordinator provided a preview of how it will look.

7. Other business: Barbara Knipe community member from the GF North Neighborhoods for Ward 1 & 2 to create interest in the neighborhood. Brought the NSS brochure to ask how it got started. Flemmer explained our projects process. Brochures done for different

reasons. Are brochures even used anymore – is that the right method or would another promotional platform be better. We would be happy to help. Barbara asked about using the current brochures to help identify the architectural styles. Also, Alpha Phi Sorority house – Barbara has the old blueprint, and asked how can they preserve that house. Flemmer mentioned that it is a contributing structure to the UND Historic District. Flemmer recommended grants to help with preservation. Knipe mentioned that they just restored the original floor this summer.

Planned out of office October 30 – Nov 7/8

October 15: Gordon Iseminger presenting on the Pest House and the Abattoir for Entertaining History at the Myra Museum. Gordon suggests putting the Pest House on the National Register since there are so few around the country.

8. Call to adjourn: Moved Munski, second Conlon. Meeting closed 7:55 pm.